

**REMARKS**

The claims have been amended and new claims have been added based on the disclosure at, e.g., pages 42, 64, and 121 in the application.

Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

**Drawings**

On the Office Action Summary, it appears that the Examiner has intended to comment on the drawings filed September 10, 2003, but she has neither accepted nor objected to the drawings.

Applicants submit that the drawings should be acceptable, and respectfully request that the Examiner make such an indication in the next communication from the PTO.

**Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph**

On page 2 of the Office Action, in paragraph 5, claims 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for an aluminum support, does not reasonably provide enablement for any support.

**The Examiner's Position**

The Examiner's position is that the specification only supports treatment of an aluminum support with the aqueous solution containing one or more divalent or multivalent cations, and that no other support is discussed.

### **Applicants' Response**

In response to this rejection, and in view of the disclosure in the application directed to an aluminum plate (see, e.g., the disclosure beginning on page 64 in the present application), Applicants have amended the claims to recite that the support in the present invention is an aluminum support.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the amended claims satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

### **Anticipation Rejection over Takita et al.**

On page 3 of the Office Action, in paragraph 7, claims 1-5, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takita et al. (US 6,114,089).<sup>1</sup>

### **The Examiner's Position**

The Examiner's position appears to be basically that Takita et al. teach a positive working photosensitive lithographic printing plate comprising an aluminum substrate, an intermediate layer and a positive working photosensitive layer wherein the aluminum substrate is anodized and rendered water-wettable. The Examiner indicates that Takita's aluminum plate is grained, etched, anodized and subjected to a silicate treatment wherein the silicate treatment is carried out by immersing the plate in an alkali metal silicate aqueous solution. The Examiner further indicates that the aqueous solution can further contain an alkaline earth metal salt such as

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<sup>1</sup> In view of the inclusion of claims 11, 15 and 19 in this rejection, it would seem that the Examiner intended to include claim 7 as well, since claims 11, 15 and 19 depend directly or indirectly on claim 7.

strontium nitrate in an amount of 0.01 to 10% by weight (column 18, lines 19-49). The Examiner asserts that this silicate treatment comprising the alkaline earth metal salt meets the present limitations for the treatment with an aqueous solution containing one or more divalent or multivalent cations.

### **Applicants' Response**

Applicants respectfully submit that the amended claims including a presensitized plate comprising an aluminum support having an image recording layer thereon containing an infrared absorbent are not anticipated by (or obvious over) Takita et al., and request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Takaita et al. discloses a positive working photosensitive lithographic printing plate having a positive working photosensitive layer. The disclosure at column 1, lines 13-19 of Takita et al. refers to a positive working photosensitive layer containing an o-quinonediazide compound and describes that the o-quinonediazide compound is changeable to a corresponding carboxylic acid on exposure to ultraviolet light.

On the other hand, the disclosure at page 3, line 14 to page 5 line 7 in the present application describes as follows. Scum is likely to occur during printing with a presensitized plate having an image recording layer containing an infrared absorbent such as a so-called thermal positive type image recording layer in which an infrared absorbent existent in a photosensitive layer manifests its photothermal conversion action and an exposure generates heat, whereby an exposed area in the photosensitive layer becomes alkali-soluble to form a positive image, and a so-called thermal negative type image recording layer in which its

exposure-caused heat allows a radical generator or an acid generator to generate a radical or an acid, by which a radical polymerization reaction or an acid crosslinking reaction is accelerated and an image recording layer becomes insoluble to form a negative type image. Taken up as one of the reasons why scum is generated is that since infrared absorbents used in these image recording layers are compounds having a relative higher molecular weight, they are hardly dissolved in a developer and are likely to be adsorbed to the surface of non-image areas on a lithographic printing plate at the time of development.

Conventionally, with a presensitized plate having an image recording layer containing the infrared absorbent like this, it is particularly difficult to materialize the production of a presensitized plate excellent in both the above scum resistance and press life.

In the present invention, a presensitized plate excellent in both scum resistance and press life is obtained by subjecting the support to the treatment with an aqueous solution containing one or more particular multivalent cations of low concentration and providing the image recording layer containing the infrared absorbent as recited in amended claim 1. This kind of invention is not described or suggested in Takita et al. in which the image recording layer is the positive working photosensitive layer.

Further, since an alkaline earth metal is excluded from the one or more divalent or multivalent cations in the present invention by the amendment above, the present invention now does not include the case in which the silicate treatment is carried out by immersing the plate in an alkali metal silicate aqueous solution, wherein the aqueous solution can further contain an

alkaline earth metal salt such as strontium nitrate in an amount of 0.01 to 10% by weight as set forth at column 18, lines 19-49 of Takita et al.

Thus, Applicants submit that the present invention is not anticipated by (or obvious over) Takita et al., and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

**Anticipation Rejection over Kawauchi et al.**

On page 4 of the Office Action, in paragraph 8, claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kawauchi et al. (US 6,843,175 B2).

**The Examiner's Position**

The Examiner's position appears to be basically that Kawauchi et al. teach a support for a lithographic printing plate which is obtained by performing at least anodizing treatment and silicate treatment on an aluminum plate, and in the silicate treatment alkaline earth metal salts such as calcium nitrate, strontium nitrate and magnesium nitrate in an amount of 0.01 to 10 wt % in the solution (column 5, line 21 - column 6, line 23), which meets the present limitations for the treatment with an aqueous solution containing one or more divalent or multivalent cations.

**Applicants' Response**

Applicants respectfully submit that the invention as recited in the amended claims is not anticipated by (or obvious over) Kawauchi et al., and request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection in view of the following remarks.

Since an alkaline earth metal is excluded from the one or more divalent or multivalent cations of the present invention by the amendment above, the present invention now does not

include the case where in the silicate treatment alkaline earth metal salts can be formulated in the aqueous solution of alkali metal silicate such as calcium nitrate, strontium nitrate and magnesium nitrate in an amount of 0.01 to 10 wt% as in Kawauchi et al.

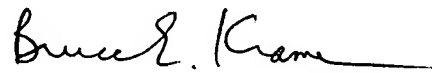
Thus, Applicants submit that the present invention is not anticipated by (or obvious over) Kawauchi et al., and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

### Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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